

DARIEN SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting of April 13, 2012

Present: Olive Hauser, Debra Hertz, Inta Adams, Ali Ramsteck, Holly Hawes, Polly Lowman, Melisse Reardon, Jennifer Geddes, Rachel Martin, Beverly Kelsey

Minutes: Minutes of the March 9, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.

Agenda Items Covered:

1. Review of the Quarterly Report:

- The Energy Assistance Program: EAP is coming to an end after a difficult season dealing with Neon due to administrative upheavals. There were fewer grants and very poor customer service. We will work harder next year to track the status of our client's payments and will meet with the new Interim director to address client issues.
- Staffing: Ali Ramsteck has been a great addition to the staff, currently working 15 hours a week. We have requested that her hours be increase to 19 1/2 hours as of July 1st. in the new budget.
- Aging in Place and Gallivant: The new combined organization is doing really well with a new driver and added car. They have a good list of volunteers working to support their various programs.
- Case Management: We continue to find that our clients require much more time on each case while there is an increase in the number of unduplicated clients we have seen in the past quarter.
- Home Goods: Use of the Home Goods closet has more than doubled since the program began. Commission members requested a list of the items we normally stock.
- Back to School: We are starting preparations for our summer collection program of backpacks and school supplies. The program will begin on August 6, 2012.

- Park and Rec: We are working with Park and Rec on scholarship requests for their programs. Soon we'll start reviewing scholarships for summer camp with the Youth Commission. Both programs have had an increase in scholarship requests.
- Half Price Taxi Voucher Program:: This program will end June 1, 2012 due to a lack of participants. Aging in Place + Gallivant are expected to cover clients previously accessing this service.
- Renters Rebate Program: This state program will begin May 15, 2012 and is available to elderly and disabled who rent.

2. Update on the Allen O'Neil Project:

The temporary re-location from Allen O'Neil units has gone smoothly with only one family remaining to move out of Phase One units. Everyone is happy and children have remained in the Darien School system with gas money provided for transportation.

3. Update on the Senior Center/Community Center:

The "Shuffle " is on track with one more P&Z meeting to be held with regard to the Board of Ed move.

4. Update on Senior Housing on Edgerton:

Architect Dan Conlan, working pro bono, is developing designs for this prospective complex. People eligible to buy will be those with a moderate income. The average square footage is estimated to be from 900 - 1100 per unit. Bruce Hill is chairing the group. They will meet with Planning and Zoning on May 22nd. Eligible occupants would have a minimum age of 60 or be on disability.

5. Client Service Review:

Types of complicated cases were reviewed by Olive.

6. Commission on Aging:

Jennifer Geddes will meet next week with the Board of Finance to present in full the request to lower the tax base of seniors living in town.

Respectfully Submitted: Beverly Kelsey